



THE EGG SERMON

OR

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN AND THE EGG

A Series of Parables Taken from the Egg

BY

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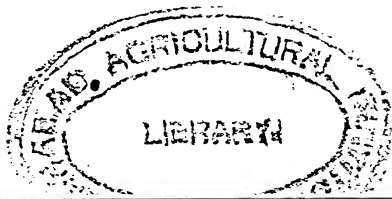
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PREFACE.

"Is there a God, and what is His nature? Is there any visible, tangible evidence of His existence, and kingdom, and nature?" All religious philosophies, superstitions, every act, thought and word are really so many answers to this question. Not long ago a man past middle age told me he had sought God all his life, and had not found Him. Aided by the strongest microscope, that opens up a world in a grain of dust, aided by the most powerful telescopes revealing new solar systems, aided by all sciences, men fail to find God; "For multitude of trees they do not find the woods."

Helen Keller, bereft of sight and hearing, when instructed by Dr. Brooks, stated that she always knew there was such a being as God. St. Paul tells us (Rom. 1: 20), "The invisible things of him (God) from the creation of the world are **clearly* seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are



without excuse." If you have not found God and learned of His nature from and through visible creations, you have no excuse. All creation is preaching a sermon of God, but since there is no speech nor language, their voice is not heard. (Psa. 19: 3). Christ interpreted the preaching of the birds, lilies, flocks, etc., for us, teaching us how we might hear the soundless voice of all creations. As an aid in this direction the writer offers the following example of what we may see and learn from creation:

"Earth's crammed with Heaven,
And every flaming bush's aflame with God,
But only they who see take off their shoes."

This may be called the sermon of the egg. The egg preaches everything spiritual essential for man to know.

Any suggestions of any nature will be gratefully received. If stamped envelope is inclosed, the writer will endeavor to answer by letter.

No apology for the appearance of this book seems called for. It endeavors to meet an

existing demand for popular instruction in spiritual things.

Engagements booked for preaching of the Egg Sermon in abridged form. May the Egg Sermon accomplish what it was intended for, is the prayer and wish of

H. ARNDT.

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EXISTENCE OF GOD.

Skeptics say they are willing to believe in God if they have some proof of His existence. They are willing to believe in the reality of faith, sonship, etc., all the things that Christians glory in, if they can only get proof of their existence. They say when they have such proof they are willing to become believers. They are like the egg outside the nest that says to itself and others: "If I only had proof of the reality of a hatching, regenerating power, of the existence of the new creature, of the new life these hatching eggs speak of, I would believe in it." Now, the only thing necessary for that egg to do in order to get real evidence is to submit to the hatching process, to let the hen apply the regenerating power to it. The short-cut for the skeptic is to let the Spirit apply the regenerating power of the word, "We are born again by his word." After the egg has submitted to this

power it experiences the results. Any one submitting to the saving power of the Gospel experiences the results. The only way to learn of the goodness of God is to taste it individually. You can never learn what an orange tastes like unless you taste it yourself. You can never understand or experience what it tastes like and feels like to be a child of God unless you submit to the influence, the saving power of the Gospel. Then you will be sure of the existence of God after His work has begun in you, after you have become a partaker of His divine nature. The trouble with skeptics is, they never give God a fair chance. They are like the eggs that stay outside of the hen's influence, really never giving her a chance to convince them of her regenerating power. In endeavoring to escape narrowness they go to its highest point. Mr. or Mrs. Skeptic, do yourself the greatest favor you can, give God a chance.

NEARNESS OF GOD.

The Christian often imagines that God has forsaken him. A heaven-high wall of trouble seems to shut him from the gracious face of his Father. He imagines that God has left him, but "Closer is He than breathing and nearer than hands and feet." God will never forsake you. It would be contrary to His nature. He is as near to us at all times as a hen is to the unhatched chicks in the egg, but through the senses we do not see or realize His presence, nor that He is always with us, even unto the end of the world, as the chick fails to see the hen because of the intervening shell. When He tells us this, it is like a hen telling the unhatched chicks: "I am with you always, even to the end of your egg life."

After we are done with the world we need no such promise, for then we see Him. After the chick has left the shell it needs no assurance of the presence of the hen, for it has

passed from believing to seeing. It is true the hen leaves the nest for a short time daily, but we are told by biologists that this is necessary to insure the proper hatching of the egg; and so God knows it is necessary to *apparently* leave you at times in your life. He then acts like the mother who is teaching her child to walk. She lets go of its hand for a second at a time, but not in order that it might fall, for she would not permit that, but in order that it may learn to walk. And so, if God seems in adversity to have left you, it is only for the purpose of teaching you to trust Him in adversity also. He is near; He *can not* leave you; His nature makes it impossible.

OBJECT OF EXISTENCE.

The question of the ages is, Why is man here, and where is he headed for? The correct answer to these questions is illustrated by the egg.

The egg may ask itself, Why am I in the world? where am I bound for? Not to be a mere egg, but to become a chick. You are in the world not merely to be a human being, but to become a child of God. That is the end and aim of your existence. Toward this end God is shaping your course. He is using all His wisdom and influence in that direction, and if this object is attained, the cost does not come into consideration. Where this end is not attained the individual has outwitted God and missed the object of his existence.

NECESSITY OF REGENERATION.

The question that Nicodemus asked, "How can these things be?" is being asked to-day on all sides. We can not realize the necessity of regeneration until we listen to Him who knew whereof He spoke. "Ye must be born again," He said. It is not enough to be born once, to be flesh born of the flesh. This is illustrated by the egg. Every egg is a chick in embryo. When it is produced it is born once, but it has not yet attained the object of its production. In order to do this it must be born again, regenerated. It must pass through a different process, and when this process begins, regeneration takes place. If the egg never passes through this process it is lost — that is, produced in vain, as far as the final object of its production is concerned. True, it has become an egg, but without incubation it is never changed to a chick. So it is with a human being. It is not sufficient for you to be merely

human. That is not the object for which God put you in the world. He is not satisfied to have merely human beings. He wants them changed to spiritually divine beings, regenerated, become His sons and daughters, and without regeneration this is impossible. Being a spirit Himself, He does not want mere human beings, flesh born of flesh, but wants beings of His own nature and kind, spirit born of the spirit. As in the case of the chick the egg stage is but one step in the process, so unregenerated human beings are not completely finished. Without being born again you can not enter nor see the kingdom of God. Without hatching (regeneration) the chick in embryo can not see, much less enter, the hen kingdom, the hen life.

REGENERATING, CONVERTING POWER.

In the case of the egg the regenerating power is warmth of a certain degree. Not any kind of warmth, but a specific temperature. So it is with the converting power in the case of man. Not any kind of teaching will save us. It must be the gospel, which is, according to its own declaration, "the saving power of God unto salvation to those who believe." Religious knowledge is not regeneration. Nicodemus was a master, teacher, in Israel, but was told he still needed regeneration. Your being a clergyman, D.D., bishop, Sunday-school superintendent, president of synod, worker, class leader, author of religious books and hymns, or of an encyclopedia of religions, etc., does not make you a regenerated being. As in the case of the egg only a certain degree of warmth, unresisted, can effect regeneration, so only the gospel of sal-

vation in Christ Jesus, unresisted, submitted to, "believed," can regenerate. Forget your position in the Christian world for a moment and ask yourself if this saving, regenerating power has been permitted to operate in you; if not, accept it now.

If you are in any way a co-worker with God by professing to be a minister, servant, of his, do not commit the unpardonable folly of trying to do this work by the power of the sciences, music, Shakespeare, etc.; learn of the hen, who never endeavors to effect regeneration of the egg by any other but the *right* power. All of these things have their place and value, but they can not regenerate. No doubt those who made such liberal use of these substitutes in place of the regenerating power are largely responsible for the empty pews and churches of our day.

WHY REVIVALS FAIL:

Churches will arouse themselves to make a special effort to win souls during revivals, and then drop down to every-day indifference, imagining that revival pitch is too high. In reality the interest aroused at such times is only natural for those who have the spirit of God. The harm done by a spasmodic effort at soul winning, which is not followed up, is illustrated by the hens that make a big fuss about hatching, and get charge of a nest of eggs in consequence. In a few days they cool off and leave the nest. The eggs are spoiled unless at once taken care of. So people are spoiled for Christianity if the work of saving them is dropped at the close of the revival. Instead of blaming the backsliders, the church is blamable for neglect of duty. As there must be a continuous application of hatching power, so there must be a continuous application of saving power on the part of the congregation.

Revivals fail on the individual's side because after the first effect of the Gospel many withdraw from its influence in different ways. This is like the eggs in which life has begun, but which roll out of the nest and away from the reach and influence of the hatching power. We can stop the work of God in us at any time. The Spirit can be quenched.

PROCESS OF REGENERATION.

"How can these things be?"

Nicodemus, asking this question, is like an egg, that has just been told of the necessity and the effect of hatching, asking, "How can these things be?" The question is natural. The *understanding* of the process is not necessary, while the *experience* of it is. The egg may learn to understand while the hatching is going on, but it would be folly to insist on understanding first. So you, dear friend, if you have insisted on understanding regeneration before accepting it, are in the ridiculous position of the egg just referred to. Christ reminds Nicodemus that even in the realm of nature there are processes of which we know only the effect. We know the sound of the wind. How foolish to refuse to accept this effect of wind because the *source* of wind is not understood. Regeneration is an effect as real as the sound of the wind; the process is

little understood. So be wise enough for yourself to learn from the egg, which does not stop to ask: "How can these things be?" "How is this work to be done?" We must simply submit to the Gospel of God, accept it in faith, just as the egg must simply submit to the regenerating power as exercised by the hen or otherwise. This comes from without the egg. You may say the egg of the ostrich is not hatched in this manner, but the egg of the ostrich is hatched by the power of the warmth as well as the egg of a hen, with this difference, that the warmth is transmitted by the sand in which it is buried. Now, whenever people try to convert themselves, to make themselves the children of God, they are like the egg that tries to hatch itself without the power of warmth. All such efforts are in vain and destined to be failures.

There are some who are really children of God and imagine that they have made themselves sons or daughters of God. They are like the chick that is being hatched and claims credit for itself. We see at a glance how

ridiculous such a proposition is. If you are a child of God, it is truly the work of the Spirit. "We are His workmanship." Some real children of God give themselves credit for the work of God within them. Provided they do not remove themselves from the saving power, this error will not *destroy* their spiritual life, and they will see their error over there where they will be seen "Casting off their golden crowns around the glassy sea." There none will claim honor or glory before the Lamb. The unhatched chick may indulge in this error, but when hatching is over, when it knows as it was known, it has no such delusions.

BROTHERHOOD OF MAN.

We read much about the brotherhood of man. There is a brotherhood of man, and there is a brotherhood of Man. The first brotherhood is a term for all who are "flesh born of the flesh." The other brotherhood is a brotherhood of regenerated human beings, of those who are born again. They must be spelled with a capital M. This difference is illustrated by the egg. There is a brotherhood of eggs and a brotherhood of chicks, partly and fully hatched. There is no brotherhood between the unhatched eggs and the chicks, and to get into the brotherhood of chicks the process of hatching must be submitted to. To get into the brotherhood of Man you must be born into the family of God through regeneration. If you have not yet been regenerated you may be in the brotherhood of man, but God would have you in the brotherhood of

Man. As an egg is an unfulfilled promise of a chick, so your humanity is an unfulfilled promise of a divine creature. Come into the brotherhood of the First-born by Him who is the door.

MEANING OF "LOST."

Much has been said and written about the meaning of the term "lost." We find this term illustrated in the egg. The hen lays the eggs for the purpose of reproduction, to reproduce chickens, not eggs. Every egg that does not attain this end is by her considered lost; and so God considers every one lost who does not attain the end for which he put man into the world — that is, eternal life or salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. A person may be considered very successful, may be called great; his name may be handed down from generation to generation in the history of the world; but unless he has been regenerated he is lost as far as his destiny and God are concerned. From God's eternal standpoint he has really lived in vain.

Some people are satisfied with being lost, not understanding their condition. Some features of their being or surroundings have arrested

their attention and hypnotized them. Some are satisfied with being merely beautiful. Beauty is divine and God-given. I believe people are not one-hundredth part as beautiful as they might be; but for a human being to be satisfied with even the highest attainable beauty is as ridiculous and inconsistent as if an egg were contented with its color or perfect form to such an extent that it would have no desire for hatching. As the beauty of the egg is as nothing compared to the beautiful being that might be hatched from it, so a person having physical beauty is nothing compared to what that person might become through regeneration. Some do not desire to be born again because of surroundings of wealth and luxury. You have an illustration of the folly of such in an egg that finds itself laid in a bushel basket full of the world's most costly jewels and is so fascinated by its surroundings that it has no desire to be hatched. The same is true of learning, title, social prestige, etc. All of these things have a great value, but if you had all of them and lacked

regeneration, you would lack the greatest gift, the one thing needful that alone would make these things valuable. You would be "lost," from God's standpoint, as the hen would count the most beautiful egg laid in the most costly surroundings as "lost," laid in vain, if it were not hatched into a chick. Dear friend, are you possibly lost in the fascination of these outward things?

JUST AS I AM.

How must we come and what preparation is necessary? The egg answers by coming as it is. The essential for it is to come under the influence of the saving power. The soiled egg has the same chance for hatching that the clean one has, eggs of one breed the same as any other. No matter how you are stained by sin, or how evil your disposition, you have as good a chance for regeneration as the person who has lived a clean life. The more the egg postpones by preparing itself, the more danger there is that it will never be hatched. The longer the sinner postpones in order to prepare himself, the more danger that he never will become a child of God.

NATURAL VS. SPIRITUAL GOODNESS.

The natural goodness of some people and the frailty of some of God's children have been confusing to many. I have been told again and again in my missionary work: "I would not do so and so, as your members are doing." I have known men who are model husbands, the best of neighbors, true parents to their children; in fact, have a whole catalogue of virtues. They are simply naturally good, but natural goodness does not make a person a Christian. The egg illustrates this. Let us take as an example an egg produced by a thoroughbred fowl. A man near Kansas City receives ten dollars for each egg produced by a certain fowl. He receives this price because many good qualities are latent in this egg. That is a naturally good egg, not an ordinary egg. Now let us suppose that this egg, endowed with so many good qualities, comes near a nest full of ordinary eggs in the process

of incubation — eggs that have in them the new life, the result of incubation.

When the naturally good person compares himself with the frail Christian he may be compared to this thoroughbred egg saying to the nest full of ordinary eggs: "I am better than you. I have qualities in me that are not in you. I would never dream of being like you." Still, all this natural goodness locked up in this egg would be lost if it were not hatched. If that egg is never regenerated, if those qualities are not brought out in a living being, it is lost. It is true where a person with many talents and natural goodness is regenerated, and thereby becomes consecrated to God, he is a more valuable instrument in the hands of God. Sankey could do more for God in the line of singing than a person who can not hold a tune. These good talents and accomplishments are invariably grown on the tree of a good ancestry. Good fruit can only come from a good tree, as we are told. As a rule, such naturally good people are the children of Christian parents who lived consecrated lives.

Every act we do, every thought we entertain, every word we speak, has an ineffaceable effect for good or evil on our descendants; and every time we submit to the will of God in anything whatever, we acquire in ourselves the possibility of transmitting to our children a greater disposition for good. In other words, what we struggle for and can only accomplish after a great effort is much easier for our children to do. It will be "natural" for them. But it would only be *natural* goodness. If you have only this you are as badly off as the above-mentioned fine egg is without hatching. The common egg being hatched, having life within itself, is far better off than that unhatched thoroughbred egg. Being a good egg does not make a chick; being a good man or woman does not constitute divine sonship or daughter-ship. Let God change your *natural* goodness to *spiritual* goodness by regenerating you! And you, dear Christian, who find it easier to lead a godly life than some others, do not become conceited. Thank God for a good ancestry. "What have you that you have not received?"



ALMOST PERSUADED.

Christendom is full of people who admit that it is necessary to be born again, to become a Christian if they would enter the kingdom of God. They admit the truth, but never put it into practice. As long as they remain in this condition they are like the egg that says to itself: "I know very well that I must pass through the process of incubation, and some day I will do so. Meanwhile I wish to enjoy my egg life. I can be an egg but once, and when I am done then I will turn to the hen and be saved." It is the best thing for that egg to be hatched at the earliest possible moment. The sooner you are brought under the saving influence of the Gospel, the better it is for you in every direction, physically, morally, spiritually, financially; in fact, in every way, for "godliness is profitable unto *all* things."

The idea of having a good time outside of the kingdom of God is a false delusion. Many

an egg has rotted before the necessary step, and many a person has been hardened in sin while postponing the necessary step. Almost persuaded is no better than lost. The good intention of being a child of God some day is worth nothing till carried out. As long as you only have the intention you are no nearer heaven than those who never give it a thought. "Hell is paved with good intentions;" it is full of people who intended to get right with God some day, but never did so.

NEW CREATURE.

Outwardly there is no difference in the man who was an unbeliever yesterday and is a believer to-day. He has the same features, is recognized as the same person, but still we are told that as soon as we accept Christ we are a new creature. This is illustrated again by the egg. Outwardly the egg seems to be the same as before incubation. As soon as incubation begins in an egg it is really a new creature; before it was chemical, now it is physical; before you were regenerated you were merely flesh born of the flesh, "mortal mind"; now you are spirit born of the Spirit. True, other eggs do not see the new creature, but the owner of the egg, looking though it, can discern the new creature; and while you, as a child of God, may appear to others to be the same as you were, or as any other human being, God, looking through you, sees the new creature. This new creature is in the

beginning frail and delicate, and it must be guarded and kept alive by the same power that brought it into existence. The same power that awakens your faith, that *makes* you a child of God, must *keep* you a child of God, if you would remain a new creature and grow in holiness.

It is not sufficient for the process of incubation to have begun in the egg and then to let the egg complete the work itself. It is not sufficient for you, for instance, to have been touched by the Spirit of God in some revival. The work done then may have been real, but perhaps you removed yourself from His influence after that. As soon as you did you ceased being a new creature. You must remain a new creature in time and eternity, just as the egg must remain a new creature, a living being at all times. Do not let any one sneer you out of the fact that as a Christian you are His workmanship (creature), *created* in Christ Jesus.

SONSHIP.

Many people talk, and ministers often speak, as if we will not be sons and daughters of God until we leave this world; but we are told by St. John: "Beloved, *now* are we the children of God." If you do not become a son or a daughter in this life, you will never be a son or a daughter. Make sure of it in this world. *This* is the day of grace. When we are told, "Now are we the sons and daughters of God," it is not a mere figure of speech. When a king pats the peasant's child on the head and says, "My son" or "daughter," it is a mere figure of speech. The peasant's child has no share or interest in the king's property, nor in his thoughts. It is not so with God. As soon as we accept Christ by faith, we receive power to be called the sons of God, because we become sons. Whatever God calls you, you really are.

This is illustrated by the egg. St. John talking to fellow Christians is like an egg telling the other eggs in the nest in process of incubation: "We are now the children of the hen." Before hatching began they were merely the *product* or creations of the hen, but from the moment it began they really were the *children* of the hen. The moment faith began in you, you became the son or the daughter of God, and to doubt this *is a sin*. Christ was crucified for saying he was the Son of God. The fall in Eden was brought about by instilling a doubt of sonship in Adam and Eve. This was also the temptation in the wilderness, and Satan succeeds to this day in causing many children of God to doubt their divinity.

The facts of the multiplication table are not so certain as is the fact that he who believes in the Son is also a son of God, is born of Him, is partaker of the divine nature. As a child of God you actually have the nature of God, being spirit born of the Spirit, just as the

egg under power of incubation has the same nature as the hen, though apparently only an egg.

The son is similar to the parent. Every day of our sonship or daughtership in Christ we become more and more like Him. The divine image is being brought out more fully in us by every act, thought and word. In this manner we "grow to the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus." It is not done at once, but "Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little." Every day brings you nearer to the goal. Just as the image becomes more perfect from day to day under the chiseling hand of the sculptor, the chick in the shell becomes more like the hen from day to day. May God give you a divine self-esteem that will prompt a right life and keep you from thinking, saying or doing whatever is unworthy of a child of God. As God's child you are not a worm of the dust unless your heavenly Father is such a worm. God is conscious of His divinity; as His child you must be conscious of yours, or you will lose it.

GROWTH IN HOLINESS — PERFECTION.

We are told that we must grow in holiness, and still we are told that we are holy. This is apparently a paradox. You may be strong to-day and stronger to-morrow, having grown in strength physically; and as truly as the law of life is growth in the physical realm, so it is in the spiritual realm. As surely as you retain eternal life you grow in holiness, and thereby you can ascertain whether you still have eternal life, namely, by inquiring whether you have grown in holiness. If you have, you are more able to do things for God than before. This is because you have gained more strength, and you get this strength from the Word. In the egg the work of the first hour is perfect, and still it must grow; there is perfection in imperfection. "We are perfect in Him," and yet, like St. Paul, we have not attained; we need to gain and grow.

Many people do not show any indication of

growth in holiness. They, for instance, on entering the church where eternal life has been given them gave five cents per Sunday as their share in the maintenance of the kingdom. If they had grown in holiness they would later on have found it as easy to give a dollar as it was to give five cents in the beginning. The chick grows in the shell. At first it can move but very little, but there is some motion, we are told by biologists. The more it grows, the more power it has. See that you grow in the inward man. The power that produces growth in the egg is the same that started the new creature. All you need in order to grow in holiness is the Word of God. You would not expect the chick to grow without power of warmth nor an infant without food; still, many starve the new creature within them, withdraw from the saving power which is in the Word. Get acquainted with your Bible, attend services more regularly, and when attending get all the possible benefit out of hymns, prayers and sermons, so you, being holy, will grow in holiness, being perfect, will grow in perfection. The spiritual chick will become a more developed chick.

PRAYER.

We are told in the Bible that if we would worship, we must worship God in spirit and in truth. What does this mean? The meaning of this is illustrated by the egg. Prayer is speaking to God. In order that the hen may speak to the egg there must be life in it. The mere egg can not speak to the hen, but an unhatched chick can, as any one can convince himself by actual experiment. The hen answers the chicks, as can also be ascertained.

Many people wonder why they receive no answer to their prayers. It is because they do not pray in spirit and in truth. In other words, they have not become the same kind of being that God is. He is a spirit, and if you would speak to Him and hear His answer you must become a spiritual being, a child of God, and live the truth. Unbelievers wonder at the assurance of Christians that God has answered their prayers. They are

like unhatched eggs outside of a nest wondering at the assurance of a chick in the shell speaking to the hen and saying that it has received an answer from the hen. An unhatched egg will say, *I* never heard an answer. That is very true. If you would be able to speak to God and hear His answer, that "still, small voice," you must come under the influence of His Word, of His Holy Spirit; then you can speak to Him in spirit, then you can get answers to your prayers. It is just as correct and natural for those not really regenerated and those no longer so to doubt the efficacy of prayer as it is for the child of God to be assured of the fact.

ETERNAL LIFE IN THIS WORLD.

Many people speak of having eternal life in the other world. If you do not get eternal life in this world, you will never get it. Christ says: "Whosoever believeth in the Son *hath* eternal life."

This is brought out by the egg again. The moment hatching begins there is life in the egg. True, it is feeble and frail, but, nevertheless, there is life. It is the same life that chick will have after it leaves the shell, and as long as it lives. The life a Christian has, the new life, is really eternal, spiritual life. It is the life you will have in all eternity, as long as you exist, and that means forever. If this life is not awakened in the egg before it is destroyed or incubation made impossible, this egg will never attain the new life. And so it is in regard to eternal life. If you do not attain this life in this world you will never have it.

There are churches teaching the contrary, that eternal life can be obtained after death, but they are in open contradiction to the Word of God. We might just as well say an egg may be hatched — saved — after it is broken. This eternal life manifests itself in a life of love, loving thoughts, loving words, in loving deeds. As the chick has the same life after leaving the shell that it had in the shell, so you will also. The more careful your walk as a Christian is, the more heavenly, eternal life there will be in your life.

HEAVEN ON EARTH.

Where is heaven? What is it? Libraries have been written on this subject, largely unnecessary, since the subject is so simple. Christ stated to Nicodemus on the memorable night: "No one ascends to heaven but the Son of man who *is* in heaven." If you are a child of God you are in heaven here. Christ could say this, because He knew Himself to be in the presence of the Father and of the holy angels, and where the Father is there is heaven. As a child of God you should have the same consciousness by faith, and faith-consciousness is the highest, *most reliable* consciousness.

The chick in the egg has not seen the outside world into which it will emerge, nor the hen that is hatching it, nor the new creatures hatched from the other eggs in the same nest. But it has no more reason to be sure of being in the world than you have of being sure that you are in heaven here on earth. On hatching we say chicks come into the world, while

they always were in it, but the shell hid the world from their view. No matter where you are, if you take the wings of morning, provided you are the child of God, you are in God's presence, in heaven. Where He is there is heaven. It is true St. Paul said: "I desire to depart and be with Christ." He was tired of earthly warfare; but when Paul emerged from the shell of his physical body he found that he could never be nearer to God, or Christ, or heaven than he was on this earth, for he knew by faith that Christ was with him always, even unto the end of the world. Whether you are at home, on the street, in some place of entertainment, at work, or wherever it is, you are in heaven, as a child of God; and after leaving this body you need not travel any distance to get to God or heaven, no more than the chick needs to travel a distance to reach the world or the hen after it has emerged from the shell. Your shell, your body and its senses, really hide heaven from your sight. When you emerge from this shell, "Death removes this mortal veil, and we behold His lovely face."

PREDESTINATION; MANY CALLED,
FEW CHOSEN.

Libraries have been written on this question. Thousands of Christians have been puzzled as to the meaning of the words, "Many are called, few are chosen." The hen illustrates the meaning of these words.

Let us suppose that the hen lays fifteen eggs. She does this in order to hatch them, and when she has done her work she leaves the nest with eleven chicks. Fifteen were called, but eleven chosen. Who is to be blamed for this? Were these unhatched chicks predestined to this end? Most surely not. It would be inconsistent on the part of the hen to go to the trouble of hatching and handling these four eggs for twenty-one days if her intentions toward them had not been the same as toward the other eggs. The same power was applied in the same manner for the same length of time; the same treatment given, and yet we find this difference. In some unexplainable manner the chicks in the shell must have stopped the pro-

cess that had begun in them. All eggs produced by hens living under their natural conditions are fertile. On examination we find that one of the chicks lived but a few hours, another three days, another ten days, and a fourth one died when about to leave the shell. Though the power was the same in their case as with the others, they did not persevere to the end. It is not right to say, "Once a Christian, always a Christian." You may lose that which you have. Your crown of life may be taken. Under the same sermon that awakens spiritual life in some, others may lose their faith. The intention of God to have the unbeliever regenerated was just as sincere in his case as it was where it was effected, but in some unexplained manner the word did not enter the heart, or it was choked by the thorns or fell on hard-trodden or rocky ground. It would be most unjust to say that God was to blame. He would have all men saved. He would not go through the mockery of calling us if He did not wish us to come, no more than a hen would go through the process of hatching eggs if she did not really wish to hatch chicks from them.

PERSEVERING TO THE END.

Many who have come under the influence of the Gospel forget the necessity of remaining steadfast to the end, but the crown of life is promised to those who persevere to the end. This is illustrated by the egg. It is not sufficient for the egg to be hatched for a short while. The new creature and life in the egg must persevere to the end. Many chicks die in the shell, and many Christians lose their faith. If you ever examined eggs in the nest which the hatched chicks have left you will have found some that had lived for a few hours, some for several days, and some who lost their life on the moment of leaving the shell. If you do not persevere to the end you may lose your faith in the last great struggle, just as many chicks die in the struggle of leaving the shell.

HYPOCRISY.

Hypocrisy is illustrated when we open an egg at the table expecting to find something good, and find it full of rottenness. The experience is disgusting, and for a long time after every egg is eyed with suspicion. This illustrates the experience of people who come in close contact with professed Christians. They expect something good from them, and when they learn the inner life they are living, they are disgusted because of the rottenness they find, and jump to the conclusion that all Christians are hypocrites. Many professed Christians are to blame for the prejudice of people outside the church. They have been found inwardly rotten by those who expected to find a sweet personality on closer acquaintance. Be a good egg, a good savor to God. The bitterest enemies of the church are those who have been deceived by some hypocrites, some rotten eggs from the nest of the church.

BACKSLIDING, FALLING FROM
FAITH.

The condition of the backslider is illustrated by the condition of the chicks who have died in the shell, but still remain in the nest. They look like the other eggs which have life in them, they feel as they do, and to all appearances they are the same as they were before, and as the eggs with life in them, but are not. This is *revealed* when the work of hatching is done. Mr. Church Member, it is well for you to inquire whether you have died in the shell, and whether your apparent Christianity is real. Do you merely look, act and appear to be the child of God which you once were, or are you still a child of God? The egg in which life has ceased can not be saved, but the backslider can come again. "Him who comes to me I will in no wise cast out." At this point the illustration fails, and we are

glad to say it does. As the prodigal can return to the father whom he left, so the backslider can return, the quenched spark of faith can be relighted and fanned into a flame.

NECESSITY OF WATCHING.

The first thing suggested by the egg is its fragility. This is an illustration of the necessity of being careful of our good conscience, our sonship or our relation to God. Christ said: "What I say to you, I say to all, watch." I have been told by a young man that he could attend any kind of a play in a theater without damage to his Christian conscience. Our relation to God and good conscience is as fragile as the shell of the egg, therefore we are constantly admonished to watch.

POWER OF FAITH.

In this weakness there is hidden strength. Delicate and fragile as the shell of the egg is, there is no man living who can take it between his hands and by squarely pressing upon the ends crush it. This is an illustration of the power of faith. Our faith is the power that overcomes the world, we are told. It has this invincible power because it clings to the Word. As long as you stand on the Word you are invincible. This was the secret of Christ's power. Many people are afraid to take a bold stand for the Bible, but Christ was not. He did so, even risking His life. That is why Satan could not overcome Him in the temptation. If Adam and Eve had clung to the Word there never would have been a fall, and if you want to maintain your sonship and want to have this power manifested in your life, you must cling to the Word. Give me the most delicate child and let it understand,

for instance, that it is written, "Thou shalt not steal," and as long as the child clings steadfastly to this Word no power on earth can overcome it. This is the reason why delicate maidens and children were in the first centuries of persecution able to face roaring lions and bear every conceivable torture without denying their faith.

DANGER OF COMPROMISE.

This wonderful strength is easily destroyed if the egg is turned slightly sideways. Strong as it was before, it is very weak now, and easily crushed. This is an illustration of the weakness of the person who is willing to compromise. Our enemy is very sly. He does not come out openly. He just tries to draw us a little from the Word, and if we do not maintain a square front against evil he has an easy time of it. When Christians endeavor to become broader than the Word, their strength is gone. Do not try to be broader than Christ, nor be ashamed to be as narrow as He. It takes the highest type of broadmindedness to stand by what "is written" in thought, word and deed.

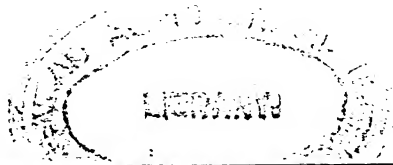
CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE.

Many people wonder why God has not surrounded them with different circumstances, why their lot is as it is. The poor wonder why they are not wealthy, the cripple why he has not the use of his limbs, the ignorant or uneducated why he did not have an opportunity of education, etc. The reason for this is illustrated in the egg. The hen does not lay her egg on the top of a round rock, because it would roll away from her; her eggs would scatter in different directions. She would not be able to apply the regenerating power. In order to be able to do this she seeks what we call a nest, where the eggs are surrounded by some obstruction which prevents them from escaping her, and *enables her to apply the hatching power*. This is an illustration of the reason why God placed you in just your circumstances, and did not put you into circumstances of a Rockefeller or some other

person. He did this in order that he might be able to perform this regenerating work, and your circumstances and conditions are for your spiritual development, the very best that the wisdom and love of God can contrive. Do not find fault with your conditions, your nest, but remember that "all things work together for good to those that love God." God's one aim is your salvation. If He could attain His object in some better manner he would do so.

TROUBLES.

Some people wonder why God sends them trouble after they enter His kingdom. Some have no trouble to get money before they become Christians. The gambler finds money falling to him while he is a stranger to God. The man without a conscience finds it easy to get money before his conscience is awakened. Things are so different after they have taken the important step. Then their troubles seem to begin, and many a one has asked why this is so. An answer to this question is given in the habit of the hen of upsetting or overturning the eggs. This is absolutely necessary if the chicks are to hatch. I suppose this upsetting and overturning is very bewildering to the chicks in the shell, but it is for a good purpose, to prevent their adhering to the shell. And so it is very necessary to you that God has led your life along the lines which you came; there is a divine purpose in upsetting



you. He would prevent your adhering to earthly things. I have been told by people who lost their eyesight, health, fortune, all that they held dear in this world, that these troubles were the means of bringing them to Christ, or of separating them from earthly things, directing their minds to the things that are above. So we must not complain if God upsets us. All things work together for good for those who love God. It was love that gave you your many blessings, and the same love compels God to withdraw these blessings if they become dangerous to your salvation. Remember this when you are upset next time.

DEATH.

What is death? The death of a Christian is different from the death of an unbeliever. The process is the same. It might be compared to the breaking of the shell. When the shell of a hatched egg breaks that chick dies out of the egg life. When the shell of an unhatched egg breaks it also dies out of the egg life. But there is a difference in the results. Those who have died in the Lord are like the chicks which emerge from their shell, the others are like the broken unhatched eggs. While they are in this life they say with St. John: "It has not yet appeared what we shall be, but we know that when it does appear we shall be like him." An unhatched chick has never seen its real self or another hatched chick as long as the shell is unbroken. It does not know what it will look like, because it has not appeared what it shall be, but it knows that when its form shall appear it will be like

the hen. Just as truly as a hatched chick is similar to the hen, having the same nature, being the same kind of being, only differing in size, so by death we will be like Him, having the same kind of being, but differing in power.

"It is not death to die, to leave this weary road,
And midst the brotherhood on high, to be at home
with God.

It is not death to bear the wrench that makes us free
From dungeon chain, to breathe the air of boundless
liberty."

CONDITION OF THE DEAD — RESURRECTION.

Living chicks are an illustration of "dead" Christians. The chicks have "died" out of the egg life, Christians died out of the physical life. Christ explains the condition of the dead (Matt. 23: 32), saying: "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him." When God appeared to Moses, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were living to God. The unhatched eggs see only the empty shell and say, "They are gone;" so we say Christians are dead, while they never saw death.

"God of the living — we must not say
That those are dead who pass away,
From this our world of flesh set free,
We know them living unto thee."

If God were to appear to you, dear friends—providing you have, for instance, parents in glory—He would say, as to Moses, I *am*—not *was*—the God of your parents. Soul-sleepers are tangled up by a figurative expres-

sion. When you die as a Christian you will be with Christ and will know it. You

“Will *see* the Canaan that we love
With unbeclouded eyes.”

This may be contrary to much theology, but some of the greatest theologians, when they were about to take the step into the unseen, upset all theological theories about condition of the dead. Sweeping through the gates, they have been able, before fully passing out, to express the truth. Some Doctor of Divinity of the Methodist Church, whose name I can not recall, shortly before leaving his body called his grief-stricken wife to his bedside. He told her: “In a few days my friends will come and take my remains out to the cemetery, and they will say they have buried me. But that is not true, for I will be elsewhere. You will only bury my body.” During his life he had many arguments to upset those holding the view expressed in these, his last words. This is *Christ's* view of the resurrection. All the Christian “dead” are living in a fuller sense of the word than ever in this world.

“Flesh and blood can not inherit the king-

dom of God" (I Cor. 15: 50). After your "death" you are done with your body. As the shell from which the chick emerged plays no further part in the existence of the chick, so you have no further use for your body after "dying." The buried body does not rise again.

MOURNING FOR THE DEAD.

Mourning of Christians over the death of Christians is inconsistent with true faith. We have no more reason to mourn over them than the unhatched chicks have reason to mourn over the empty shell left behind by the hatched chicks. I believe much of this mourning is mourning over the lack of love showed to the departed.

“Why do we mourn departing friends
Or shake at death’s alarm?
’Tis but the voice that Jesus sends
To call them to his arms.”

Even the grief of separation would be less bitter if we would stop to consider. We have no more reason to mourn for the death of Christians than the disciples had reason to mourn over the death of Christ. Nor should we make so much ado over the empty shell of the corpse with expensive funerals and tombstones. The hen does not give much attention to the shells from which chicks have emerged.

The living are often obliged to suffer want in order that the dead might be "honored" with expensive funerals and tombstones for the empty *shell* of a body. The honored memory of a man is dependent on other things, and can not be bought in this way.

PRECIOUSNESS OF THE DEATH OF CHRISTIANS.

What does the Bible mean when it says that "The death of the righteous is precious in the sight of God"? Have you ever seen a person anxiously awaiting the hatching of some eggs? As soon as one was safe there was a certain degree of joy, and with every new arrival the joy grew. In other words, the hatching of these eggs was precious in the eyes of the owner, and so when the righteous dies it is precious in the eyes of God, because there is a new inhabitant in heaven. All the angels of heaven rejoice at the death of a child of God. As we do not count our chicks before they are really hatched, so God knows that only by persevering unto death are his children really safe.

There is really no reason why we should mourn or be sad at the death of a Christian. If we are bound to mourn, let us mourn over

the fact that we have not yet reached that stage in our development. Does it look right for us to mourn over that which is precious to God, over which He rejoices? Not till death does He reap the result of all his patience and mercy applied to the saving of that individual. The hen may have much joy in anticipation of the final complete hatching, but she can not fully rejoice until the chick is fully hatched, died out of the shell. So God and all the inhabitants of heaven rejoice over the repentance of a sinner. It is a joy in anticipation which is only a foreshadowing of the joy felt over the final complete hatching into the other world. Little joys are precious to little minds, and events, a joy that is precious to the great mind and heart of God must be a real joy. Mourning does not suit the occasion.

FEAR OF DEATH.

Much has been said about some Christians' dread of death and the unconcern of infidels on the approach of death. The living chick may be filled with dread and apprehension before leaving the shell, but is there a foundation for such fears?

"Why should we start and fear to die?
What timorous worms we mortals are;
Death is the gate of endless joy,
And yet we dread to enter there."

As the unhatched egg has no consciousness of what awaits it, so the unregenerated is incapable of realizing what is coming at death, and is, therefore, *apparently* secure.

VISIONS OF THE DYING.

What are we to believe of the visions of dying Christians? Some of the most eminent psychologists of our and other days tell us these visions of the dying are but the picturing of their own thoughts; in other words, hallucinations. The answer to this question is illustrated by the egg. Can a dying Christian see those who have preceded him to glory? I answer, yes. Just as surely as an unhatched chick can, after its shell is picked, see those chicks which are completely hatched, so can those of God's children who are on the point of going to glory actually see and speak with those who have preceded them to glory. This is not spiritualism, this is biblical truth. For this reason Elijah and Moses could appear to Christ. Moses had left his shell. When witnesses of a Christian's death wonder what the dying can see or hear while they see and hear nothing, they are like unhatched eggs wonder-

ing what that chick with the picked shell can possibly see and whom it can be talking to. Some chicks burst forth at one effort, while others are long in passing out; so some Christians burst suddenly into glory, while others are slower; the latter have the visions.

IMPASSABLE GULF.

There has been much discussion of the impassable gulf. It is illustrated by the breaking of a hatched and unhatched egg. There is an impassable gulf between that downy, beautiful chick and the mass of rottenness that emerged from the other egg; it is a gulf of *condition*. No chick can get into, nor change the state of, a rotten unhatched egg. So Lazarus could not become as Dives was, nor help change his condition. The saved and lost are in sight and hearing of each other. As the chick sees the corruption before it, it must realize that only unreserved and immeasurable love saved it from such a fate, and its heart must be full of gratitude to the hen; so the saved, realizing by contrast the depth of redeeming love, are inspired to eternal songs of gratitude. The power that once could change an egg into a chick is of no avail then. The power that can change a human being to a spiritual being is

helpless after the shell is broken, which breaking corresponds to death. There are some things impossible in the kingdom of God; this is one of them. "Now is the day of salvation." Do not expect any post-mortem salvation.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN ON
EARTH.

CHURCH RIVALRY.

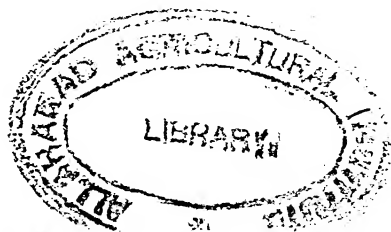
The kingdom of heaven on earth may be compared to a poultry yard. Let us suppose the proprietor of a poultry yard has given all his available money and mortgaged everything he has in order to buy thoroughbred eggs. His object in doing this is not to obtain eggs, but thoroughbred chicks. Let us suppose them to be white Wyandott eggs. He brings them to his poultry yard, and intrusts some to the care of the incubator. He has a broody goose, which also receives a portion. A turkey, which by its action indicates a willingness to do this work, also receives a portion; likewise a duck, and a large number of hens of different breeds. As soon as he has distributed the eggs the fowls begin to look with contempt and suspicion upon the incubator. Because it has no feathers, they think it is a mistake to expect

any good results from it. The goose, knowing herself to be the only one of her kind, hisses in disdain at the others. The turkey has similar thoughts. The duck likewise. The same is true of all the other fowls. They express their opinions of the others by picking at each other, stealing the eggs from each other's nests, and in every way possible injuring each other. I have seen a hen leave her nest to crowd some other hen, who was attending to her duty, off her nest, while her own eggs were chilled and spoiled. Now, is there any good reason for this bitterness and suspicion with which these fowls regard each other? The goose will not hatch goslings, nor the turkey turkeys, nor the duck ducklings, but when the work is done there will appear white Wyandott chicks. All the different nests will produce beings of the same kind. If they had only attended to the work of their own nests they could have saved themselves much anxiety and each other much annoyance.

This is an illustration of the kingdom of heaven on earth, which comprises the Chris-

tian denominations. God has given all that He has in order to redeem (purchase) man. His object, as the poultryman did not merely want eggs, but chicks, was not to redeem man merely in order to have human beings, but in order to have them changed into spiritual beings, and this work He has planned to do through certain agencies in this world. The saving, transforming, regenerating power in each case is the Gospel. Just as the incubator and the different fowls applied the same power, so the Bible and different Christian denominations apply the same regenerating power of the Spirit in the Word. Many people are saved who never enter a church, through a direct contact with the Word of God. They are like the chicks hatched in the incubator. Where this power is applied human beings are changed from flesh to spirit, are made children, of God.

The same groundless jealousy is found among the various denominations as among the fowls we have just heard about. Let us suppose the goose to be a denomination which



says: "We are the only saving church." But she is not alone in her conceit. Practically all denominations are possessed by the same denominational zeal, some in greater, some in lesser degree. In my own denomination—formerly—the Lutheran Church, I heard a pastor preach against the Roman Catholic Church. Some weeks later I heard him again preach against the same church. About a month after that he was still harping on the same string. A member of my congregation who was married to a Roman Catholic husband, after trying for months, at last induced her husband to attend the services at that Lutheran Church, and this time the pastor preached against the Roman Catholic Church. When service was over the husband very justly asked his wife: "Have your ministers no more to teach you than to criticise others? Have you no more to learn in the Lutheran Church?" His wife could not answer him, but managed to bring him into that church again. Unfortunately, the same subject was under discussion, and now no power on earth will bring that man into a Lutheran Church, and justly so.

But this is not true of the Lutheran Church only. I mention this because I was a member of this church. I have known a minister in North Dakota to tell my members who were witnessing a baptizing in a creek: "All Lutherans are damned to hell." I would not judge that denomination by such a narrow mind. I heard one of the greatest men in that man's denomination say, after concluding a series of meetings for young men: "I am not here to increase the membership of the ——— church in general, nor of this congregation in particular. If you have accepted Christ, it is absolutely immaterial what Christian denomination you join." Let us stop pulling feathers out of each other. Let us stop stealing the eggs out of the other denominations' nests. Let us pay *close attention to our own nests*. The Lutheran minister above referred to was actually letting his eggs get chilled in worldliness while he was worried about those eggs in the Catholic Church nest. We should all feel as Moody did when he said: "If I had one denominational hair in my head I would pull it out before I retire.

If I had one drop of denominational blood in my veins I would let it run out before I'd live another hour."

There is absolutely no reason why we should regard each other with suspicion. There will be no Lutheran, no Baptist, no Presbyterian, no Methodist, etc., in heaven, only Christians. St. John saw this in a vision. They were all alike, all clothed in white garments, which had been washed in the blood of the Lamb.

Let it be our one aim to bring all sinners under the regenerating power of the Gospel of Christ; that is what God expects of all Christian denominations. No matter what church you belong to, use your influence that the aim of all work of that church be directed toward applying the Gospel to sinners, thereby saving them, changing them to children of God, and keeping them such. If we do this, then we will, at the close of God's hatching season, not have so much meanness and bitterness to repent of.

Christ is everything, denomination is nothing. As in this illustration the rivalry is

more among the fowl than the chicks, so in the churches. If all professors of theology, clergymen and church officials could be banished to one of the South Sea Islands, the question of church federation would be quickly settled and a much-needed revival might take place on that island. The *truths* of Christianity would be perfectly safe—in fact, more safe than ever—in the absence of the supposed guardians of the truth.

WHAT CHURCH SHALL I JOIN?

The man asking this question is like an egg in the above poultry yard saying — supposing that to be possible — “What nest shall I enter?” I would say: Make some inquiries into the past history, and you will find that one has a reputation of grabbing many eggs by means of revivals, but not following up the work. As some birds are notoriously poor hatching, so some churches are poor soul winners. Of such the egg should beware, unless they change their ways. If you attend all churches, not wishing to bind yourself to any, do your duty to *all*; do not be a dead-head. But whatever you do, for God’s sake, for humanity’s sake, for your sake, do not withdraw from or resist (disobey) the Gospel of Christ, the saving hatching power.

RAPTURE.

The rapture which St. Paul describes when he says, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord"—this is illustrated by the hen leaving the nest with her brood of chicks as soon as her work is done. Only those which are alive can hear her call and go with her. When Christ comes only those who are His can hear His call and be drawn to Him, to be with Him always. Those who have died in the shell can not answer the call when it comes, nor can those who never had life in them. This is what is meant by the foolish virgins who could not hear the bridegroom call. As the hatching season is limited, so the opportunity of entering God's kingdom will not last forever.

POSTSCRIPT.

Judging by the experience of others, reading The Egg Sermon has benefited you in some part of your spiritual life; repeated readings and meditation will increase the benefit. If some improvement of passages occurs to you, kindly send it to me, also other illustrations from the egg that occur to you. Please write just what you think of the "Sermon."

If you have been benefited, would you kindly tell friends of the book and send me the names of such as might be interested in it? As soon as possible translations into other languages will be published.

H. ARNDT.

No. 607 LOCKLAND AVE., CINCINNATI, O.